

My 4th grade son was identified as TAG in kindergarten. That year the teacher said that she would provide more advanced math games. 1st grade, the teacher said she would start an advanced small math group which never materialized. 2nd grade, even less was done. After we talked to the teacher about applying for single subject acceleration in math, she told him he could choose to do 2nd or 3rd grade levels on their electronic math platform when it was his turn. He has his friends started a club called 4-cubed. In order to join the club you had to know the answer; meanwhile he was bored to tears (literally crying!) as the class went over simple math such as (literally!)  $0+2$ . We had enough and applied for the only program in our district for accelerated students; thankfully he won the entrance lottery. I explained to him that to go to the new school he would need to leave his really good friends, including his best friend, at our neighborhood school. By the end of the year he was so desperate he was willing to sacrifice his friendships for the opportunity to learn. It's really sad when you think about it. That next year my other son was starting kindergarten at an Oregon Dept of Education charter school. He hated school... "It's boring!" His math work consisted of shapes and counting. I inquired about TAG testing or TAG programming; they flat out said they had no testing, no programming. We had him privately tested and his math was in the 99th percentile. Since he was going to be in a 1/2 blend classroom the next year I asked if he could at least do math with the 2nd graders. They said that would depend on his reading ability. Tough luck for him, his reading tested in the 10th percentile so he would likely be stuck in 1st grade math. Thankfully he got entrance through the lottery, too. So now both of my kids are bussing 10 miles each way to the only gifted alternative program in the district. Even though the neighborhood school bus picks up 3 houses up and 3 houses down from us, the alternative program bus only picks up at the entrance to our neighborhood. This is another barrier and an equity issue.